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ORGANIZATION AND ARMAMENT OF HUNGARIAN ARMED FORCES

Comment: The following survey of the Hungarian armed forces is taken from issues of Hadak Utjan, monthly Hungarian emigre periodical published in Munich, during the period June 1952 - January 1953.

The eight sections of the report deal with the following subjects: (1) organization and armament of the rifle, or infantry, division; (2) infantry weapons; (3) organization and armament of the artillery; (4) organization and armament of the antiaircraft forces; (5) organization of the air force, including the parachute division; (6) types of aircraft used by the air force; (7) army discipline; and (8) organization and armament of the frontier guard.

Illustrative charts and sketches follow each section except Section VII.

Sections II, III, and VI were signed by ABA [unidentified], and Section VIII by P. P. [unidentified].

Numbers in parentheses refer to appended sources.]

1. ORGANIZATION AND ARMAMENT OF THE RIFLE DIVISION

During the 1949 war games, the Hungarian rifle divisions as well as armored and mechanized divisions, were organized entirely on the Soviet pattern. The 1951 - 1952 organization plan, however, shows certain deviations from the Soviet model, mainly in the reduction in number and types of the new heavy Soviet weapons. The main reason for the change is the doubtful reliability of the Hungarian rifle units, which represent the major part of the army.

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Infantry Riflemen

The bulk of the rifle division is formed by three rifle regiments, one of which is motorized. Each regiment is composed of three battalions and the regimental reserve.

The rifle battalion is composed of one machine-gun company with 12 Maxim machine guns, one mortar company with nine 82-millimeter mortars, one anti-tank platoon with two 45-millimeter antitank guns, one antiaircraft platoon with four 12.7-millimeter antiaircraft machine guns, one signal platoon, the regular motorized service units, and three rifle companies. Each rifle company consists of three rifle platoons and one machine-gun platoon equipped with 28 submachine guns, 9 automatic rifles, and 2 Maxim machine guns. The battalions of the more recently established rifle divisions are even less heavily armed, as shown in Figure 1 at the end of Section I.

The units of the regimental reserves are: one submachine gun reconnaissance company; one antitank company with four 57-millimeter and two 45-millimeter antitank guns; one supporting battery with four 76.2-millimeter cannon; one mortar company with six 120-millimeter mortars; one antiaircraft company with six 12.7-millimeter antiaircraft machine guns; one signal and one engineer company, and the corresponding service units. These companies are generally motorized. The supporting battery and the mortar company in several regiments of the newly formed divisions are still horse-drawn. In such cases the mortar companies are equipped with six 82-millimeter mortars.

Tanks

The striking power and firepower of the rifle division is greatly increased by its supporting armored regiment. The armored regiment is composed of one antitank battalion with 12 SU 76.2-millimeter antitank guns; one submachine-gun-equipped reconnaissance company composed of a motorcar and motor-cycle platoon, and one tank battalion. The tank battalion, consisting of three companies, has 33 tanks equipped with 76.2-millimeter guns mounted on T-34 tanks.

Artillery

The artillery serves under the divisional artillery commander. It is composed of one field artillery regiment, one medium-heavy mortar regiment, one heavy antitank battalion, and a self-supporting motorized 76.2-millimeter battery which serves primarily to reinforce the reconnaissance battalion.

The artillery regiment contains one motorized observation company and two or three battalions of three batteries each. The field artillery regiment has a 76.2-millimeter and a 122-millimeter howitzer battalion, whereas the mortar regiment has two 120-millimeter mortar battalions. Each battery is equipped with four guns or mortars.

Antiaircraft Artillery

In addition to the antiaircraft units of the regiments, the division also has an antiaircraft battalion consisting of three batteries, each of which has six 37-millimeter antiaircraft guns. There is also a spotting and signal platoon.

Reconnaissance

The reconnaissance battalion of the rifle division generally has one armored-car company with 10-12 armored cars; one tank company with 17 old-model T-34 tanks, one motorcycle and one motor-vehicle submachine-gun company;

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one antitank platoon; one mortar platoon; one signal platoon; and motorized service units. Some divisions have cavalry companies instead of the motor-cycle or the motor-vehicle submachine-gun companies.

Technical Troops

The division also has one battalion of engineers, composed of two companies equipped with modern machines; and one signal battalion, equipped with radio, telephone, and construction units.

The service units of the division contain the supply, repair, and transport units. They are modeled entirely on Soviet lines.

Motorized and Self-Sustaining Rifle Divisions

The following differ somewhat from the foregoing organization:

1. Motorized rifle division, all units of which are motorized. The antitank company of the reserve regiment is equipped with four 76.2-millimeter and two 57-millimeter antitank guns. The antitank platoon of each battalion has two 57-millimeter antitank guns.

The field artillery regiment has three battalions, one of which is armed with 76.2-millimeter guns and the other two with 122-millimeter howitzers.

Under the rearmament program, the mortar regiments are now being equipped with 160-millimeter mortars. The heavy armor-piercing battalion is equipped with twelve 85-millimeter pieces.

2. Self-sustaining rifle division, located in the northeastern part of Hungary. In 1951 - 1952, when this division was organized, it was composed of one 152-millimeter mechanized howitzer battalion and one multiple-rocket-launcher battalion, in addition to the units previously described.

In addition to the units described above, all divisions have separate training regiments which provide training for recruits, retrainees, and specialists.

In 1951 - 1952, in addition to three motorized rifle divisions, each corps had the following reserve units:

1. One motorcycle submachine-gun battalion.
2. One mechanized, medium-heavy howitzer artillery regiment consisting of two battalions equipped with two batteries of 152-millimeter field howitzers each.
3. One heavy 160-millimeter mortar regiment composed of two battalions equipped with a total of four batteries, which are currently being equipped with 160-millimeter mortars.
4. One artillery assault battalion equipped with SU 85-millimeter guns.
5. One signal battalion composed of one radio and telephone company, and two construction companies.(1)

[An organizational chart of the rifle division follows.]

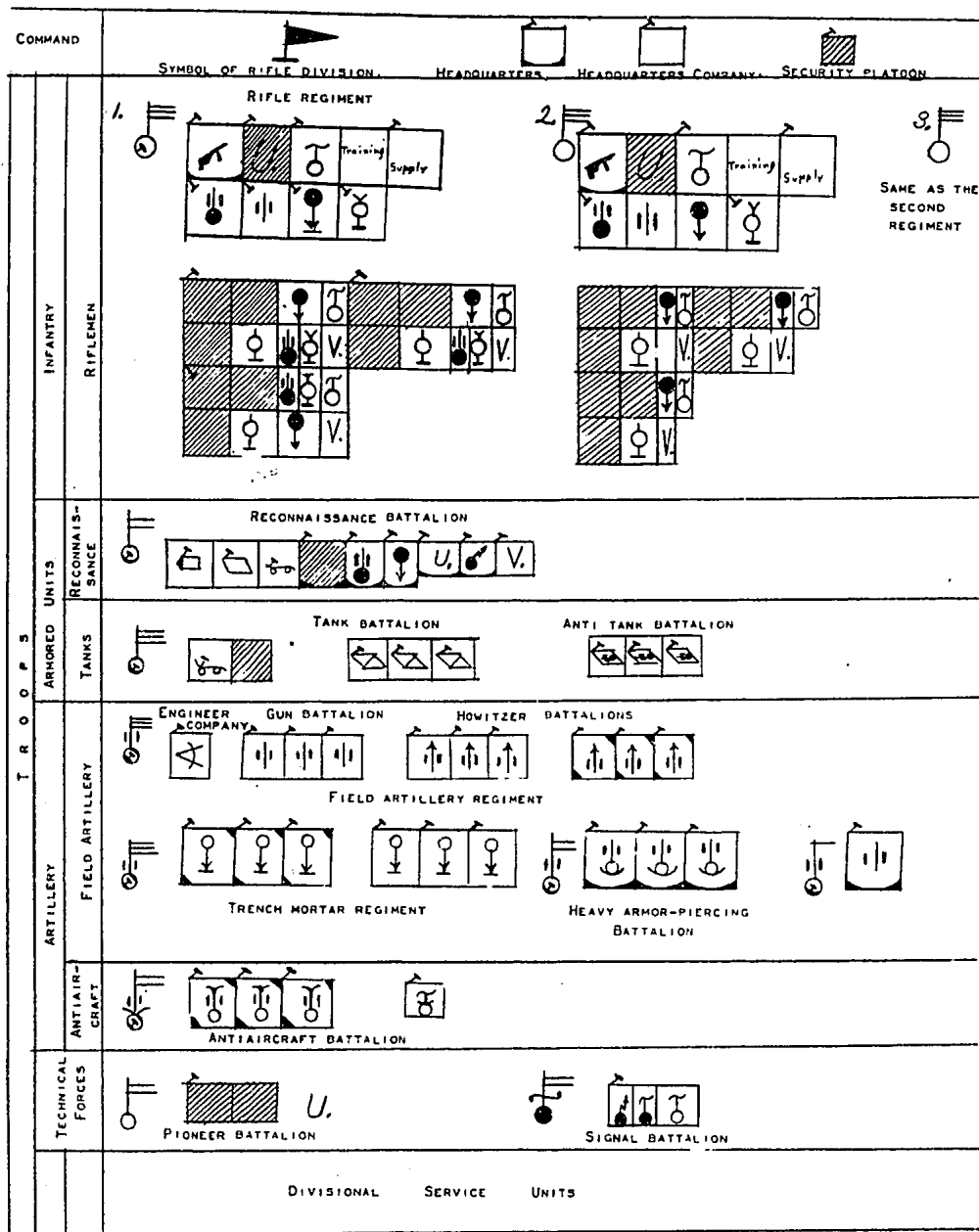
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FIGURE 1. HUNGARIAN INFANTRY DIVISION



✓ PRESUMABLY A SQUARE REPRESENTS A COMPANY, AND A HALF SQUARE REPRESENTS A PLATOON.


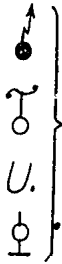








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KEY TO SYMBOLS ON CHART

	SUBMACHINE GUN
	SIGNAL: RADIO AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS
	ANTITANK
	MORTAR
	ARMORED TANK
	ARMORED CAR
	ARTILLERY
	HOWITZER
	ANTIAIRCRAFT ARTILLERY
	MOTORCAR OR MOTORCYCLE

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II. INFANTRY WEAPONS

The following section presents a survey of the infantry weapons currently used in the Hungarian Army.

At the end of World War II, the newly formed Hungarian Army was equipped largely with weapons taken over from the old army. No real army existed at that time, however, and, until the end of 1948, its bulk was composed of 15 frontier-guard battalions, supplemented by the cadres of the 1st and 6th Divisions; some guard units at the larger garrisons; and artillery and technical troops, likewise in skeletal form.

On orders from Moscow, the Hungarian Council of Ministers resolved in a secret session held in January 1948 to build up the army. One of the most difficult problems in this connection was how to arm the new units to be set up. The Hungarian war industry had practically ceased to exist. Although its reconstruction under the Three-Year Plan had made an excellent start, it was still very far from being able to furnish the necessary weapons and munitions. The obvious solution of this problem was to purchase these items from the USSR. It also was obvious that the Hungarian Army, like the armies of the other satellites, had to adopt Soviet ordnance.

The first supply of weapons and munitions came from the stocks of the Soviet occupation forces stationed in Hungary; however, at the beginning of 1948, arms shipments began to arrive from the USSR also. Most of the Hungarian armed units set up during 1948 were equipped with Soviet ordnance, although the frontier guards, the police forces, and some army units were still equipped with the old Hungarian arms. Subsequently, increasing Soviet shipments and Hungarian arms production provided sufficient equipment to satisfy all requirements of the new Hungarian Army. At present, the Hungarian armed forces are equipped exclusively with Soviet-type weapons.

The first Soviet shipments consisted largely of weapons which had been used in World War II and of other obsolete items. After the army's requirements had been satisfied by later Soviet deliveries and the Hungarian arms industry, however, up-to-date materiel from the first shipments was handed over to the police forces. Currently, old Hungarian armament can be found only in possession of factory guards and similar organizations.

The introduction of Soviet weapons in Hungary was accompanied by a propaganda campaign, the object of which was to popularize them among the Hungarian soldiers. Actually, the campaign merely served the purpose of earning good will in the USSR for the authors of the propaganda, since veteran Hungarian soldiers knew that the Russian weapons, although crude compared with Western armament, were safe in operation and accurate in aiming.

Details on the various Soviet weapons used by the Hungarian infantry follow:

1. The M 91/30 Mossin-Nagant rifle, called the M 48 rifle in the Hungarian Army (all Soviet weapons used in the Hungarian Army are called Type 48), with 7.62-millimeter caliber; leaf sight; and double locking, hand-operated bolt action. Weight, approximately 4 kilograms; muzzle velocity of the projectile, 826 meters per second, loaded from a magazine containing five cartridges. The rifle is a variation of the weapon used in the Russo-Japanese War. The main changes are: shorter barrel, metric calibration of the sight, and improved cartridge. (See Figure 2 at end of Section II.)

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Firing precision is about the same as that of the Hungarian M 35 rifle. First-class marksmen get the same results with this rifle as with the old one, that is, 470-380 circle units on the international target. The same marksmen attained 510-520 circle units with the old Mauser rifle.

Rifles with telescopes. A selected weapon of good precision, is entirely identical with the above rifle, equipped with a telescope with a magnifying capacity of two or four. It is a marksman's weapon. (See Figure 2.)

2. The M 40 Tokarev gas-pressure-type semiautomatic rifle with 7.62-millimeter caliber and bolted trigger. Its ballistic data are identical with those of the M 91/30 rifle. Loaded from magazines containing 10 or 20 cartridges. One of its variations can be used for automatic firing (See Figure 2). Its gas chamber becomes easily clogged and, as a result, there are frequent disturbances in its operation.

3. The 48 M semiautomatic pistol with 7.62-millimeter caliber, loaded from magazine with eight cartridges. Muzzle velocity of bullet, 540 meters per second.

4. Submachine guns. Three types are used, substantially similar to one another, namely:

a. Type M 40.

b. Type M 41, which is the type most used by the Hungarian Army. The difference in appearance between these two types is slight (as, for example, in the leaf sight). However, Type M 40 can be used for automatic firing only, whereas Type M 41 can also fire single shots. Both types have wooden stock and butt and are loaded from circular magazines containing 71 cartridges. (See Figure 2.)

c. Type M 43. This type is structurally identical with Type M 41 but is made of metal, with the exception of the handle. It is equipped with collapsible butt and arched magazine containing 30 cartridges. (See Figure 2.)

All three types are 7.62-millimeter caliber, weight-locking, automatic weapons and use pistol cartridges. They fire about 550-600 shots per minute with a muzzle velocity of 500 meters per second. Because of their light weight, they have a pronounced upward thrust in sustained firing. These pistols have been nicknamed "danza gitar" (dance guitar).

5. The M 28 Degtyarev machine gun, with 7.62-millimeter caliber, bolted trigger, and gas-pressure piston. It can be used both for single shots and rapid firing. The machine gun is loaded from a flat, circular-shaped magazine containing 50 cartridges. Theoretical firing speed, 500 shots per minute, with a muzzle velocity of 826 meters per second. The butt is of wood and is supported by a forked stand when the weapon is in firing position. (See Figure 2.)

An old-type Maxim-Tokarev machine gun is also being used. (See Figure 2.)

6. The M 10 Maxim machine gun, a Russian weapon which was used in World War I. This 7.62-millimeter-caliber machine gun is a bolted automatic weapon with a slight recoil. Firing speed, 300 shots per minute with a muzzle velocity of 826 meters per second. The weapon is belt-fed, liquid-cooled, and mounted on two wheels drawn by two men or transported disassembled. (See Figure 2.)

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The pistols and submachine guns use the same sized cartridge. The rifles, semiautomatic rifles, machine guns, and automatic rifles use the following cartridge types: ordinary lead bullets without marking, steel bullets with red tips, explosive bullets with red-black marking, and tracer bullets with black tips.

7. The M 38 Degtyarev 12.7-millimeter belt-fed heavy machine gun with bolted trigger and gas-pressure piston. Firing speed, 350 shots per minute with a muzzle velocity of 1,080 meters per second. It is employed usually as an anti-aircraft weapon supported by a tripod, but it can also be used for land targets. The machine gun, mounted on wheels, is drawn by three men; however, it more often is transported on a light truck called "Wippon" (derived from the US "weapon carrier"). Ammunition: ordinary lead bullets without marking, explosive bullets with red-black tips, and tracer bullets with black tips. (See Figure 2.)

8. The M 41 muzzle-loading mortar, with 50-millimeter caliber, smooth Stokes barrel, and simple sight. Firing distance, 50-500 meters. Transported in shoulder packs. The M 40 50-millimeter mortar, which is substantially identical with the M 41, is also being used. (See Figure 2.)

9. The M 36 mortar, with 82-millimeter caliber and calibrated sight. It is also a Stokes-type weapon. The Soviet sights use the 6,000-division calibration instead of 6,400 divisions. Ammunition: three increment charges besides the primer charge. Firing range, 50-2,600 meters. (See Figure 2.) The M 36 and M 41 mortars are similar in appearance; only the carriage plates and sights are different in the two types. Furthermore, the M 41 mortar is mounted on two wheels.

10. The M 38 mortar, which is a heavier model of the M 36 mortar. It is similar to the type introduced in Hungary in 1944, with the difference being that it has a fixed firing pin. It uses projectiles 120 millimeters in diameter having six increment charges besides the primer charge. Firing range, 100-6,000 meters. Transported in one unit, it is mounted on a carriage drawn by a weapon carrier. The mortar can be tilted into firing position immediately from the carriage. (See Figure 2.)

The firing procedure of all three mortars is similar to that known in the old army as "base securing firing" (támpontszerző lövés). There is a widespread belief that, during World War II, the Soviets fired mortars excellently. It is true that they did fire well, but their effectiveness was largely attributable to the great number of mortars in their possession.

11. The M 42 45-millimeter antitank cannon, with flat wedgelock, almost identical in appearance with the old Hungarian 40-millimeter antitank gun. Armor-piercing capacity at 200-meter range, 95 millimeters. Drawn by weapon carrier. Fires antitank and high-explosive shells.

12. The M 41, M 42, M 43, and M 44 antitank guns, of 57-millimeter caliber, equipped with a wide carriage plate and a gas counter-recoil piston above the barrel. The armor-piercing capacity of the latest type is said to be 80 millimeters at a range of 800 meters. Drawn by truck.

13. The D 42 76.2-millimeter antitank gun, equipped with muzzle brake, a wide carriage plate, and wedgelock. Its armor-piercing capacity may be approximately 100 millimeters, but no reliable data are available. It resembles the M 42 7.5-centimeter Hungarian antitank gun; however, here, too, the pneumatic counter-recoil piston is located above the barrel. Drawn by truck. The same gun, drawn by a team of six horses, is also used by some units of the field artillery. (See Figure 2.)

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14. Hand grenades. The Hungarian Army is equipped partly with the M 42 hand grenades with handle used in the old army, and partly with two types of Soviet hand grenades, namely, the thin-walled assault-type with handle and the corn-cob-shaped defense type. In addition, the so-called antitank hand grenade with handle is also used.

In conclusion, the experiments conducted during 1951 by the HTI (Honved Technikai Intezet, Army Technical Institute) with infantry arms may be briefly surveyed.

The object of one of the experiments was a machine pistol, designed by Major Kucher (fnu), head of the arms department of the HTI. The pistol is a 7.62-millimeter collapsible-type weapon, weighing 3.5 kilograms, with a muzzle velocity of 500 meters per second, equipped with weight lock and loading from an arched magazine containing 32 cartridges. Temporarily, only samples have been made.

Experiments were also conducted on the following types of antitank guns:

1. The 45-millimeter caliber, attaining a muzzle velocity of 2,150 meters per second with 4.8-kilogram high-explosive shells and 1,780 meters per second with 5.1-kilogram high-explosive shells.

2. The 76.2-millimeter caliber, attaining a muzzle velocity of 1,980 meters per second with 6.2-kilogram high-explosive shells and 1,650 meters per second with 5.4-kilogram high-explosive shells.(2)

[Sketches of 15 Hungarian infantry weapons follows.]

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FIGURE 2. INFANTRY WEAPONS USED IN THE HUNGARIAN ARMY

RIFLES:

1. M 91/30
2. M 91/30 WITH TELE-
SCOPE
3. M 40 TOKAREV
4. M 40 SIMPLE TOKAREV

SUBMACHINE GUNS:

5. M 40
6. M 41
7. M 43

MACHINE GUNS:

8. M 28 DEGTAREV
9. MAXIM-TOKAREV

HEAVY MACHINE GUNS:

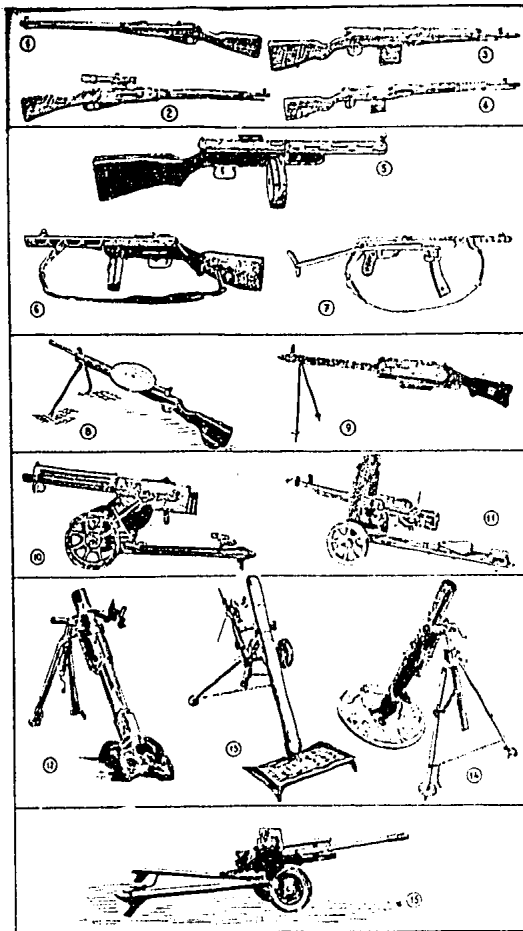
10. M 10 MAKIM
11. M 38 DEGTAREV

MORTARS:

12. M 41
13. M 36, 82 MM
14. M 38, 120 MM

ANTITANK CANNON

15. M 42, 76.2 MM



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III. ORGANIZATION AND ARMAMENT OF THE ARTILLERY

The Hungarian field artillery, as well as antiaircraft artillery, currently is equipped only with light- and medium-weight guns. The artillery is largely self-propelled, and only the 76.2-millimeter pieces are drawn by truck. The truck types most frequently employed are the following: Botond, GMC, ZIS, Federal, and Ganz. The various types of guns used by the Hungarian Army are as follows:

Field Artillery

1. The M 42 76.2-millimeter gun, with a maximum firing range of 13 kilometers, using 6.3-kilogram projectiles. This gun is identical with the anti-tank gun described among the infantry weapons.

In addition, the Hungarian field artillery still uses the model M 36 76.2-millimeter gun, a predecessor of the M 42. The M 36 has a shorter range and a somewhat shorter barrel without muzzle brake.

2. The M 38 122-millimeter howitzer, with a wide carriage plate, liquid brake, pneumatic counter-recoil, and flat wedgelock. Maximum firing range, 11.8 kilometers; weight of projectile, 21.2 kilograms. This projectile is in general use in the field artillery. The howitzer is drawn by truck. (See Figure 3 at end of Section III.)

3. The M 37 152-millimeter howitzer, with muzzle brake, barrel balance, and wide carriage plate. Transported on a two-wheel carriage. Maximum firing range, 18 kilometers; weight of projectile, 38-40 kilograms. (See Figure 3.)

4. The M 13 rocket launcher, known as the "Stalin organ." Mounted on a truck chassis. It has eight tubes capable of launching two rockets each, or a total of 16, simultaneously. Uses 130-, 132-, 135-, or 140-millimeter projectiles. Maximum firing range, 6 kilometers; the rockets spray an area of 500 x 500 meters. Although its fragmentation effect is very slight, it has a great psychological effect.

The M 8 type rocket launcher is similar to the M 13. It has 28 launching tracks in two rows of 14 tracks each and is capable of firing 28 [sic] rockets simultaneously.

Antiaircraft Artillery

1. The M 39 antiaircraft automatic gun fires 37-millimeter projectiles and has a short recoil. The gun, which is manufactured under a Bofors patent, is practically identical with the M 36 40-millimeter automatic gun used in the old Hungarian Army. It has a crossed carriage plate, flat wedgelock, and exchangeable barrel. Firing speed, 100 shots per minute. Effective firing altitude, 3,000 meters. Drawn by truck. (See Figure 3.)

Hungarian ordnance also includes the M 36 40-millimeter automatic gun which was used in the old Hungarian Army. A practically identical type is also employed by the Soviet Army.

2. The M 39-L/55, 85-millimeter antiaircraft gun with crossed carriage plate and flat wedgelock. Maximum firing altitude at 80 degrees, 11 kilometers. Uses the same ammunition against ground targets as the T 34-85 tank. (See Figure 3.)

The M 29 8-centimeter antiaircraft gun, used in the old Hungarian Army, is also included in the ordnance.

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Armored Vehicles

Technical data on the armored vehicles employed by the Hungarian Army are listed in the following table (3):



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Armored Vehicles of the Hungarian Army

Type	Marking	Weight (tons)	Armor (mm)				Armament	
			Turret	Front	Sides	Rear	Caliber of Gun	No of Machine Guns
Tank	T 34	26.3	20-70	45-60	45	45	76.2 HGA	2
	T 34-85	29.8	20-75	45-60	45	45	85 (*1)	2
	J. Stalin	50	30-110	75-105	90-95	60	122 HKA (*4)	3
Assault Car	SU 76	15	16-35 (*2)	26-35	10-16	16	76.2 PCTA (*5)	--
	SU 85 (*3)	30	20-45	45	45	45	85 HKA	1
	SU 122 (*3)	30	20-65	45	45	45	122 HKTAR (*6)	1

(*1) With or without muzzle brake.

(*2) Open turret.

(*3) On T 34 chassis.

(*4) HKA = Harkowski agya (tank gun).

(*5) PCTA = Panceloszi agya (armor-piercing gun).

(*6) HKTAR = Harkowski tarack (tank howitzer).

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Size of Vehicle (m)			Speed (km/hr)	Performance in Over-coming Obstacles (m)			Cruising Range (km)		No of Personnel
Length	Width	Height		Wall	Ditch Width	Depth	On Roads	Cross Country	
5.90	3	2.45	50	0.90	3.00	1.10	450	260	4
6.05	3	2.72	50	0.75	2.80	1.20	400	260	5
6.65	3.12	2.75	25	1.00	2.50	0.85	300	125	5
4.50	2.75	2.10	45	0.65	1.80	0.90	450	300	4
5.93	3	2.36	50	0.90	3.00	0.90	450	260	4-5
5.93	3	2.15	50	0.90	2.80	0.90	450	260	4-5

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From the above description of infantry and artillery weapons, the armament of the Hungarian Army may be considered up to date, even though it does not include the latest Soviet types. However, the quality of the materiel is only one factor. Much will depend on the willingness of the Hungarian soldiers, who are now clothed in Soviet uniform, to use their weapons for the benefit of the imperialism and slave system of the USSR.



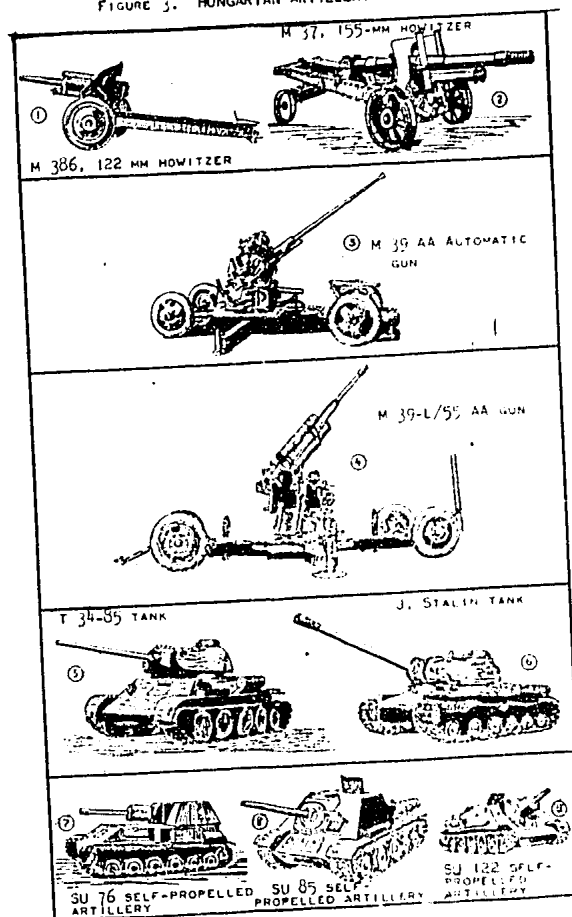
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FIGURE 3. HUNGARIAN ARTILLERY



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IV. ANTI-AIRCRAFT FORCES

During the 1951 - 1952 training year, great stress was laid on the development and organization of antiaircraft artillery and of modern fighter forces, as well as on increasing the number of field artillery units.

Under the Soviet-sponsored munitions program, the various tool and "machine tool" factories have begun to produce 37-millimeter antiaircraft machine guns and 85-millimeter antiaircraft guns in series. At the same time, many of the units which were equipped with World War II antiaircraft supplies have been reorganized. As a result, the number of antiaircraft divisions has been increased.

The organization of the antiaircraft divisions varies according as their assignment is stationary or mobile. In the spring of 1952, the organization of the mobile antiaircraft artillery groups was still of the uniform order-of-battle type, generally applying the principle of dichotomy. The stationary antiaircraft divisions, organized for so-called autonomous assignments such as the Budapest Autonomous Antiaircraft Division, have a larger number of batteries equipped with medium-heavy arms. They are also provided with powerful searchlights, listening equipment, and mobile radar units, depending on the requirements of their territory.

A mobile antiaircraft division consists of two medium-heavy regiments, each having four batteries equipped with 85-millimeter antiaircraft guns. Theoretically, each regiment consists of two battalions, each with two batteries. In addition, the division has two light regiments equipped with 37-millimeter antiaircraft guns. Each light regiment consists of six batteries, that is, two battalions with three batteries apiece.

The batteries of both types of regiments each have four gun sections, four 12.7-millimeter antiaircraft machine guns, an improved R/3-type radio station, and a wired signal platoon.

The regiments also have a radio-equipped spotting and reporting platoon, which ties them into the radio-directed air defense through its powerful radio stations.

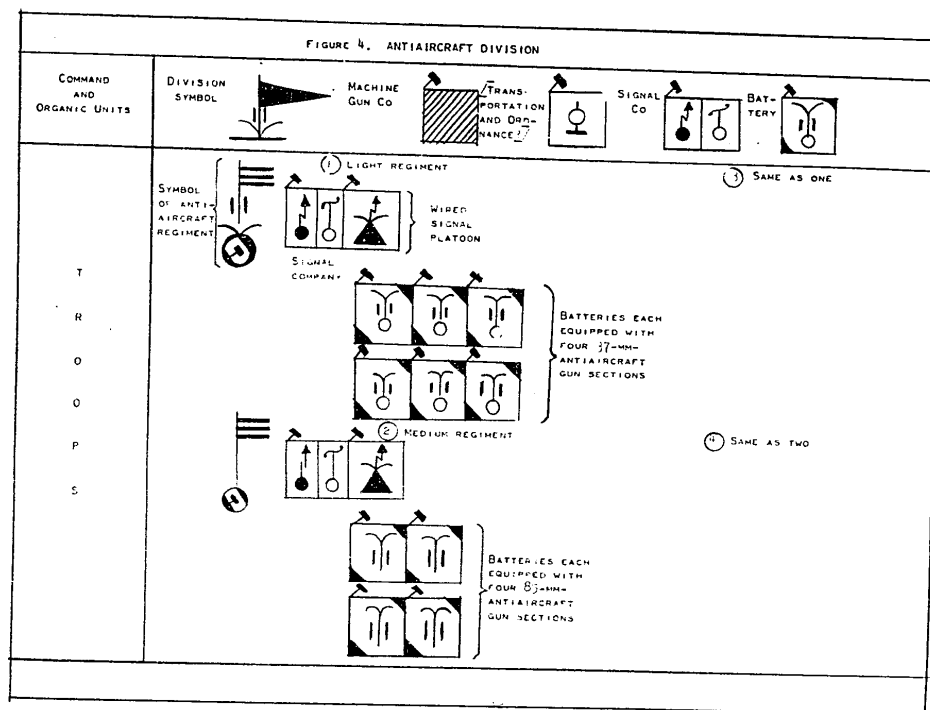
Each antiaircraft division also has a staff, a machine-gun company for ground defense, a signal company, and certain service units such as a transport company, ordnance, and similar units which are common to all troops in peacetime.

The stationary antiaircraft division differs still further from the mobile antiaircraft division in that its heavy and medium-heavy antiaircraft regiments generally have three battalions of three batteries each. The light machine-gun regiments are organized in the same way.

All the Hungarian antiaircraft forces are under the command of the OLP (Orszagos Legvedelmi Parancsnoksag, National Air Defense Command) which works under the strict control of a Soviet advisory staff. Other organizations also under this command are: the Professional Air-Defense Organization (Hivatasos Legoltalmi Szervezet), which consists of an extensive network of observation and signal air-defense districts active since 1949 with centers established at Zalaegerszeg, Kaposvar, Veszprem, Komarom Kiskunfelegyhaza, and other points; the National Air-Defense Center (Orszagos Legvedelmi Kozpont); and a special air-defense signal battalion.(4)

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V. ORGANIZATION OF AIR FORCE AND PARACHUTE DIVISIONS

Despite the greatest efforts of the Hungarian government to build up modern armed forces, Soviet distrust has kept the Hungarian Air Force in the role of a stepchild for a long time. This distrust is evidenced by the fact that the new airfields, as well as the enlarged old airfields, were not meant to serve the Hungarian Air Force but the western Soviet air bases.

The organization of the first Hungarian Air Force division to be located at Kecskemet was prepared in 1949. However, it did not receive its personnel until 1951, when carefully screened commissioned and noncommissioned officers returned from a training course in the USSR. This personnel provided the nucleus of the Hungarian Air Force. (See Figure 5 at end of Section V.)

Concurrently, the new Hungarian Air Force, which then consisted of approximately 120 first-line aircraft (YAK-9s and IL-10s), was reorganized on the Soviet pattern into regiments, "eskadrillas" (from the Russian "eskadril'ya," squadron), "odelenyes" (from the Russian "otdeleniye," division), etc., while the ground personnel were placed in "technical divisions." The following is a detailed outline of the organization of the Hungarian Air Force.

1. The Hungarian Air Force division is composed of three regiments. At the end of 1951, the division included two pursuit regiments (vadászszereg), equipped with YAK-9s; and one fighter regiment (csatárepülő szereg), equipped with IL-10s. Each regiment is divided into three companies (század), each company into three squadrons (osztály), and each squadron into groups of two planes (gepparok). Generally, a pursuit squadron consists of two groups of planes (total of four planes) and the fighter squadron of three or four groups (total of six to eight planes). Besides the three regiments mentioned above, the air force division also includes a headquarters company (parancsnoki század), a courier plane company (futargép század), a motorized air signal battalion (repülő-írádo zászlóalj), an aircraft artillery battalion (légvédelmi tüzér osztály), and supply units (átutazási szervek).

2. At present, a jet fighter division (légvédelmi vadászadosztály) is being organized. Its composition will be similar to that of the division described above, but its equipment, obviously, will be different.

3. The technical division of the air force (repülő műszaki hadosztály) is composed of RKZs (Repülő Kiszolgáló Zászlóaljok, Aircraft Service Battalions), the repair and maintenance shops, depots, and transport and supply units. In peacetime, the RKZs are generally stationary, while the RKZ Training Regiment (RKZ Kiképző Szereg) and the Air Force Technical School (Repülő Műszaki Iskola) -- both of which are located at Szekesfehervar -- can set up the technical installation of airfields in the fighting zone, as well as behind the lines, both in peacetime and in war.

4. The Parachute Division (Ejtoernyos Hadosztály) is composed of independent battalions (ejtoernyos zászlóaljok). Some of these battalions already have been trained and equipped for service, while others are in the course of formation. Each battalion is divided into three rifle companies (harjozó lövész századok) and special technical units. These battalions, composed of personnel selected and trained with particular care, represent the most reliable elite component of the Hungarian armed forces. They are stationed on airfields which are occupied exclusively by the Soviet Air Force (Taszar, Papa, etc.). It is understood that LI-2 transport planes, nicknamed "Teve" (camel), are assigned, as needed, to the parachute battalions.

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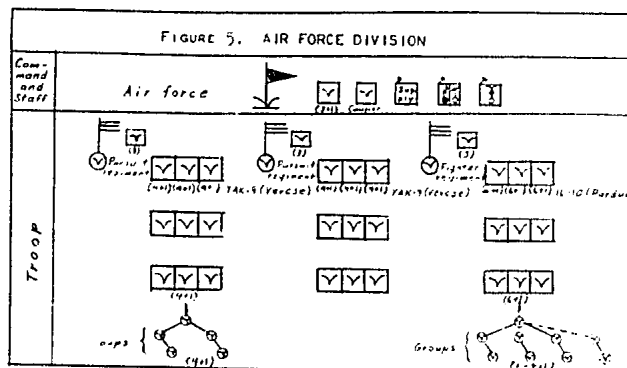
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5. The Hungarian Air Force is under the jurisdiction of the Air Force Command (Legierok Parancsnoksaga), which, in turn, is completely controlled by Soviet advisory staffs (tanacsado torzsek). The authority of the Air Force Command is limited practically to the selection and ideological training of the personnel and to propaganda.(5)

[An organizational chart of the Hungarian Air Force division follows.]



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VI. TYPES OF AIRCRAFT

The invading Soviet Army did not find a single serviceable aircraft on the Hungarian airfields in 1945. As a result, the small Hungarian armed forces, which were organized in the same year, did not possess an air force.

The situation remained unchanged until 1948. During the 3 years' interval, wrecked Hungarian aircraft were converted by the Budapest Sivaly aircraft factory into fewer than ten Bucker-Jungmann training planes. In this period, the Hungarian Air Force consisted only of airfield guards and training units.

The first major change occurred in the autumn of 1948, when Hungary received 35-40 UT-2 training planes from the Soviets. These planes were placed under the command of Col. Tibor Zalka, assisted by Soviet Col. Kovachovich (fnu) as technical adviser.

Subsequently, Hungary purchased 25 Bucker-Bestmann and a number of Arado 96-A, Arado 96-B, Fieseler-Storch, Siebel-Hummel, Sokol, and Aero-45 training and courier planes from Czechoslovakia. In addition, a few Arado 96-B planes were built at Budapest. All these planes were turned over in part to training companies and in part to the OMRE (Országos Magyar Repulo Egyesulet, Hungarian National Flyers' Association).

OMRE was organized in January 1948 to train civilian flyers, and its branches were established largely in industrial areas with a view to training young workers considered loyal to the regime.

At the same time, most of the equipment of the Hungarian Air Force was purchased in the USSR. The first shipment, which arrived in September 1949, consisted of 50 YAK-9 pursuit planes, 50 IL-10 Stormovik fighter planes, a few LI-2 transport planes, and other aircraft. All planes were delivered without emblems at the Kecskemet airfield. Since hangar space was insufficient, the planes were kept temporarily under tarpaulins in the open until March 1950, when half of them were assigned to other Hungarian airfields.

Concurrently, training of Hungarian pilots and ground personnel was begun, largely by Soviet instructors. Later, the training was given by Hungarian instructors under the supervision of Soviet advisers.

To speed up the training program, two groups of trainees, consisting of 150-200 men each, were sent to the USSR in the autumn of 1949 and in the spring of 1950, respectively. The trainees returned to Hungary at the end of 1950 and in the summer of 1951, respectively, after most of them had received instruction in the operation of jet-propelled fighter planes.

Soon after the return of the first group of trainees from the USSR, the first Hungarian Air Force unit was organized. It consisted of two pursuit companies equipped with YAK-9s; two fighter companies equipped with IL-10s; and one RKZ (Repuleni Kiszolgalo Zaszloalj, Aircraft Service Battalion).

Rebuilding some of the Hungarian airfields to accommodate jet fighter planes was begun as early as 1950. However, jet-propelled aircraft were not observed in Hungary until mid-1951, when the first MIG-15s were received.

The emblem of the Hungarian Air Force is a five-pointed star in a red-white-green circle, placed on the fuselage and both wings. It has an over-all diameter of 100-120 centimeters, and the color stripes of the circle have a width of 15 centimeters each. Each aircraft also has serial markings, which

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consist of a capital letter followed by a three-digit figure. The letters are: I (iskola, school) or G (gyakorlo, training) on training planes, V (vadasz, hunter) on pursuit planes, and C (csata, battle) on fighter planes.

The various types of aircraft were given the following names: Bucker-Jungmann is called "Csiz" (siskin); Bucker-Bestmann, "Fecske" (swallow); UT-2, "Galamb" (pigeon); Fieseler-Storch, "Golya" (stork); Sokol, "Siraly" (gull); Arado 96-A, "Varju" (crow); Arado 96-B, "Hollo" (raven); YAK-9, "Vercse" (kestrel); IL-10, Stormovik, "Parduc" (panther) or "Sturmo-Parduc"; and LI-2, "Teve" (camel) or "Pelikan." The name given to the MIG-15 is not known.

Data on the three principal types of aircraft used by the Hungarian Air Force are as follows:

1. YAK-9: Single-seat pursuit plane with low wings; equipped with a 12-cylinder, high-performance compressor, V-motor, marked VK-107/a. The motor is water-cooled and has a maximum output of 1,650-1,700 horsepower at 3,200-3,300 rpm at an altitude of 8,000 meters. Maximum altitude, 15,000 meters; landing speed, 160-180 kilometers per hour; maximum speed in horizontal flight, 670 kilometers per hour; traveling speed, 500-550 kilometers per hour; cruising range, 1,200 kilometers; weight, 3,500 kilograms; length of fuselage, 8.2 meters; wingspread, 10 meters; armament, two 12.7-millimeter built-in machine guns and one 24-millimeter automatic cannon firing through the propeller. Some of the YAK-9s reportedly are equipped with 20-millimeter Berezin automatic guns.

2. IL-10 Stormovik (Sturmo-Parduc): Monoplane fighter plane, equipped with a 2,000-horsepower ethyl-cooled motor. Maximum speed in horizontal flight, 650 kilometers per hour; traveling speed, 450 kilometers per hour; armament, two 12.7-millimeter machine guns; two 24-millimeter built-in automatic guns; and one 12.7-millimeter machine gun, which can be turned at an angle of 45 degrees. Armor: 6 millimeters around the motor and 12 millimeters around the cockpit. The pilot and the radioman-cannoneer are seated back to back. The cockpit is covered with 20-millimeter-thick plexiglass.

3. MIG-15 jet-propelled pursuit plane. Maximum altitude, 15,000 meters. Can reach a 10,000-meter altitude in 8 minutes. Maximum speed, 1,000 kilometers per hour; landing speed, 175 kilometers per hour; cruising range, 1,000 kilometers at an altitude of 5,000 meters; flying weight 6.5 tons; length, 11 meters; height 3.4 meters; wingspread, 10.1 meters. Equipped with automatic cannon.

Data for the UT-2 Galamb training plane: Monoplane with canvas-covered, low, wooden wings; equipped with a 5-cylinder, 135-horsepower, star-shaped motor and wooden propeller; traveling speed, 150 kilometers per hour; maximum altitude, 4,000 meters; fuel consumption, 42-45 liters per hour; fuel-tank capacity, 200 liters.(6)

[Sketches of the YAK-9, IL-10, and MIG-15 are shown in Figure 6.]

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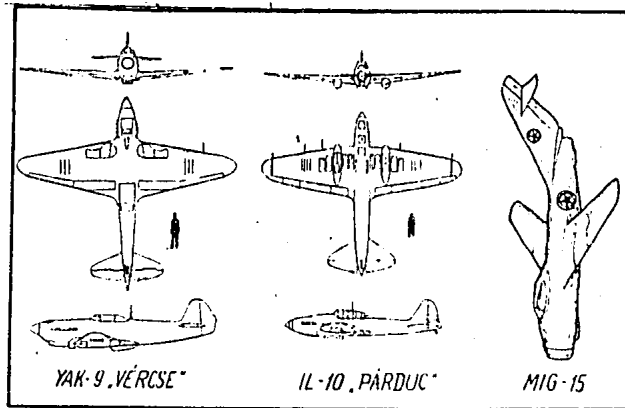


FIGURE 6

VII. ARMY DISCIPLINE

The Hungarian People's Army was established in 1948 on the basis of the former Royal Hungarian Army. The previous service regulations were still in effect, and the officers of the former army still in service tried to enforce discipline in the new army on the old basis. At that time the party neglected the army, reduced the cadres, and kept only 10,000-15,000 men under arms.

The development of the "democratic" spirit in the army began in 1947 when it came entirely under Communist control. An attitude of "loosened" discipline was fostered through political indoctrination by Communist educational and political officers. Simultaneously, the service regulations were revised to conform to the Soviet model. These regulations were finally voided in the fall of 1951, and Soviet regulations were introduced in their stead.

The Soviet service regulations are based on the principles of Lenin and Stalin, which hold that the end justifies the means. If someone is jailed, he must learn the essence of Communism during his confinement; force or corporal punishment may be used if necessary.

In spite of this, discipline is very lax. The relation between officers and men is strained. Many of the officers are the products of rush training courses and make themselves ridiculous through lack of familiarity with the service regulations. Consequently, the basis of their disciplinary authority is frequently questioned by the troops. The speeches and teachings of the political officers do not ease the situation. The speeches are distasteful to the soldiers, who make every effort to avoid them.

Disciplinary punishment is about the same as it was in the Royal Hungarian Army. At the regimental level it consists of the following:

1. Restriction to barracks or camp for up to 30 days.

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2. Simple confinement for 30 days during which the soldier cannot leave the city or camp and must remain in the guardhouse when off duty.

3. Imprisonment for 3 weeks, during which the soldier remains in the guardhouse at all times and is put on a diet consisting solely of water every second day.

Discipline depends mainly on the activity of the political officers. This situation puts the company commander in an awkward position in relation to his men, because the political officer has informers in the company. These informers are unreliable and usually the least disciplined. Since the company commander can never tell who is an informer, he has to tolerate even serious disciplinary infractions, because if he antagonizes an informer, he himself may be accused of being a reactionary or an enemy of the people.

Consequently, few men volunteer for officer-training courses. The students of the Kossuth Academy and of the other service schools are chosen by the Party from among the reliable Communists.

Although there is a penalty of 8 years' imprisonment for listening to banned radio stations, groups of soldiers throughout the country listen to the Voice of America on their R-7 radios in the presence of their commanding officers.

The Hungarian Army is united in its hatred of the Communist regime. Ninety-five percent of the men are opposed to Communism. However, a soldier who is head of a family can get a subsidy only if his party membership and reliability are certified by the local party authorities.

Discipline was especially lax in 1951 because it was rumored in Budapest that the term of military service would be extended from 2 years to 3 years for all military personnel from technical sergeant (tiszthelyettes) upward. At the same time, all military personnel from corporal (tizedes) upward was to be promoted to the rank of warrant officer. The private first class (orvezeto) was to become file leader (elhonved). This news turned out to be true and had a very bad effect on morale. Desertion and absences without leave increased. Each soldier tried to have as many disciplinary actions on his record as possible in the hope of avoiding a promotion. The threats and threats of the political officers failed to change the attitude of the troops. Even physical punishment was of no avail. However, privates and file leaders were released the following fall.

Recruits inducted in 1951 entered with the intention of remaining privates. No one believes in the permanence of the present regime or desires favors from it.

Lack of discipline made the maneuvers of 1950 a complete failure. The Soviet military advisers expressed their utmost condemnation of the entire situation. The Soviet service regulations were adopted as a direct consequence of this incident.

The Hungarian peasant is disliked in the army because he is considered unreliable. The sons of kulaks are almost entirely excluded from the officer-training courses. Most of the officers come from the ranks of factory workers and the former agricultural laborers who are enslaved today. Recently, gypsies have been much favored as officer candidates; gypsies were always considered inferior persons by the Hungarian peasants and will never be accepted in a position of command even by the industrial workers.

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The USSR will always regard the Hungarian Army with suspicion, no matter how well equipped it may be. Military service is unpopular, and desertions are frequent. This army will never be able to make the Hungarian peasant give wholehearted support to the present regime.(7)

VIII. ORGANIZATION AND ARMAMENT OF FRONTIER GUARD

During the first years of Soviet occupation, the Hungarian armed forces consisted of two skeleton divisions, composed of a few training battalions; a division of technical units, such as mine-detecting troops; and the frontier guard. The latter was organized by Lieutenant General Palfy-Osterreicher, who has since been liquidated.

The frontier guard, which was composed of 15 battalions until 1949, has been basically reorganized and developed to keep pace with the growing army. The reorganization, as well as the development, was not restricted to the troops serving in southern and western Hungary, but it was carried out throughout the country.

At the beginning of 1950, the frontier guard was placed under the command of the AVH (Allamvedelmi Hatosag, State Security Authority). The commander-in-chief of the AVH, Lt Gen Gabor Peter, appointed Maj Gen Laszlo Piros commander of the new frontier guard. General Piros' first task was to weed the unreliable elements out of the officer corps and the ranks of noncommissioned officers and to replace them with reliable men trained in accelerated courses of instruction.

The Budapest training and emergency-police battalions were the nucleus of the AVH frontier-guard officers' school. The school is housed in the Voroshilov Barracks (previously Count Nadassy Barracks) and is supervised by Soviet officers. Theoretically, the school has a 2-year course of instruction; in practice, however, only one year's instruction is given. The students of the school, which is conducted entirely on Soviet lines, are recruited from among the noncommissioned officers and other enlisted men of the frontier guard sponsored by the party. Two thirds of the students (approximately 800) graduate annually on 4 April as officers, whereas one third usually remains at the school to take special courses in intelligence and counterintelligence work, after which they are assigned to the western and southern frontiers of Hungary.

When the frontier guard was reorganized, recruit training was decentralized and entrusted to training battalions at the various area commands. It was the duty of these battalions to train both enlisted men and officers.

Concurrently with the reorganization of the training system, the frontier guard was gradually strengthened and regrouped along the western and southern borders of the country. Former frontier-guard battalions became area commands, and the mobile rifle companies became frontier-guard battalions. The location of the area commands, together with the length of border under their jurisdiction, is shown on the map appended to this section. Soviet advisory officers are attached to each area and battalion command.

The AVH frontier guard is divided into area commands. The area command is composed of a number of frontier-guard battalions, one training battalion, one motorized reserve company, the command staff, and special troops. In addition, special engineer battalions are assigned to duty under the area

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commands along the southern and western frontier sections, where fortifications are being built. These engineer battalions were formed from the engineer units of the former frontier guard.

The area command staff consists of a motorized signal platoon (with radio and telephone squads); the "D" group, which directs counterespionage; and the supply units.

The training battalion generally consists of three or four companies, three of which give basic training to recruits, while the fourth is engaged in the training of officers and "tiszthelyettesek" [noncommissioned officers?]. After three months of basic training, the recruits are assigned to regular frontier-guard battalions. Approximately 700 recruits are assigned to each training battalion each year on 1 November. Some of the recruits trained at the eastern and northern area commands are assigned to the more heavily guarded southern and western frontier sections after completion of their training. The training battalions also may be used as police to reinforce or supplement frontier-guard forces. In that case, they usually are employed in occupying communications centers, in searching certain areas, in guarding buildings, or in similar roles.

The motorized reserve company serves as the central reserve of the area command and is used occasionally to reinforce a frontier section or to check the posts and patrols of the frontier guard. The southern area command also has four or five old T-34 tanks to reinforce the reserve companies.

The number of frontier-guard battalions under an area command depends on the length of the frontier section and on military requirements. In general, three battalions are assigned to one area command. Each battalion consists of three to five posts, besides staff and supply units. On the western and southern frontier sections, each battalion has a mounted detachment, the duty of which is to check the infantry patrols. Each battalion stationed along the southern frontier between the Danube and the Tisza rivers also has a motorized reserve company, which has the same function in its own section as that of the area reserve company.

The frontier posts under the command of the battalion generally have a strength of 63 men each. Their equipment usually consists of thirty-six 7.6-millimeter Soviet-type rifles, 20 submachine guns, 12 light machine guns, and 2 Maxim machine guns. The armament of the mobile patrols and scouts varies according to the time of patrol duty and the extent to which the respective section has been alerted.

The engineer battalions are located largely in the south. Both the western and southern regions are fortified in depth along the entire length of the border.

The fortification consists of permanent and temporary sites, such as concrete bunkers, emplacements for heavy infantry as well as artillery armament, sheltered passages, assembly areas, and similar installations. Some of these fortifications, especially the gun emplacements which are being built along the southern border, are capable of accommodating much greater forces than the border guard alone.

Fortification work, such as earth moving and road construction, is performed by labor battalions consisting of interned persons or by the local population under the direction of the engineer battalion. The barricades and mine fields along the border are inspected and serviced by special engineer units.

At the beginning of 1952, the frontier guard was again subordinated administratively to the Ministry of Defense; functionally, however, it continued to operate under the various AVH commands (Pecs, Szeged, Szombathely, etc.).

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The officer staff, strength, and armament of a frontier-guard area command are roughly equivalent to the battle strength of an infantry regiment. In fact, the frontier guard may be considered a component of the Hungarian Army, and it was in this capacity that it took part in the joint Hungarian-Soviet maneuvers in the fall of 1951 and in 1952. (8)

Figure 7 shows the disposition of the units of the frontier guard.

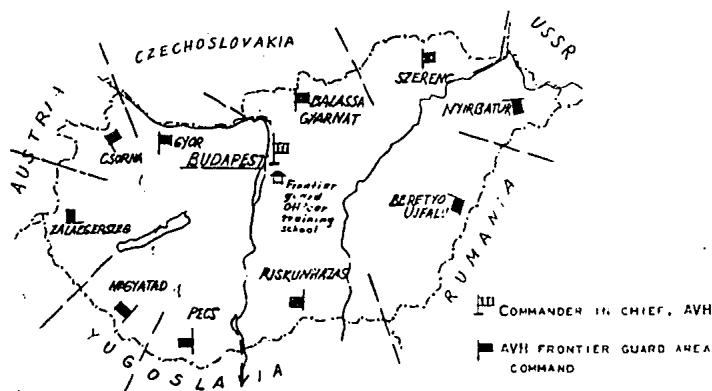


FIGURE 7. FRONTIER GUARD UNITS

SOURCES

1. Hadak Utjan, Vol IV, No 38, Jan 52
2. Ibid., No 42, Oct 52
3. Ibid., No 43, Nov 52
4. Ibid., No 39, Jul 52
5. Ibid., No 40, Aug 52
6. Ibid., Vol V, No 45, Jan 53
7. Ibid., Vol IV, No 41, Sep 52
8. Ibid.

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